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for assistance and advice to all libraries of the state and to direct public attention to the importance of libraries as civic and educational institutions."

North Dakota: "A central library in every county. Simplified methods that can be used without confusion by teachers and others not trained in library science. Uniformity in methods which will enable, teacher, pupil and citizen changing from one school or city to another to lay hands at once on their customary tools in new environment. Understanding of Dewey system, which will give children a familiarity in methods which will enable them as they grow older and move about the world to feel at home in any library large or small, and which will unconsciously make of them citizens in the wide realm of books."

Pennsylvania: "I regard as the most valuable work of the commission that per-

formed by personal service in the sparsely settled regions, and the development of the idea leading to the foundation of a local library no matter how small."

Texas: "We are trying to influence the lives of the citizens of the state as a whole much in the same way that a public library influences the lives of the local community. That is our vision for our commission. Specifically, we desire in the next few years to put adequate library service into every county in the state."

After hearing these expressions of aim and earnest purpose from the various commissions can there be any question of lack of definite aim or high endeavor on the part of individual commissions? It remains for the League to select some immediate line of work on which all can concentrate in united action.

WHAT CAN THE LEAGUE OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONS DO FOR ITS MEMBERS?— PUBLICATIONS

BY JOHN A. LOWE, *Agent, Massachusetts Free Public Library Commission*

From all the activities of the war time organizations probably the public library is as anxious to learn whatever lessons there are for us as any other up-to-date institution. One of the problems has been what to do with the pamphlets and printed matter of the different organizations with which the libraries have been deluged. It has been suggested that the state library commissions each in its own commonwealth should receive this material direct from the organizations, and distribute it to the libraries in its charge. The idea is undoubtedly that the commission knows the community and the needs of each library better than any other one centralized organization. And similarly it has been suggested that the League might gather and digest all this public material and issue to each commission through lists information of what is appearing, which the commission should in turn requisition from the publishers and distribute to the libraries in its state. This again seems unpractical, for the League has neither funds nor any officer who is in a position to give all his time to this

particular work. Moreover, the National Library Service plans to undertake just this sort of thing.

Of a similar nature, it has been suggested that the League can assist its members by becoming a central organization for the preparation and distribution of library advertising material. This is worked out well in the Pacific northwest.

Of the possibility of the publication of pamphlets which the League might consider, several suggest themselves which would be used in extensive distribution, perhaps being sent to every library under the care of a commission. Some of these are: A buying list for small libraries; an annual best books list; a pamphlet setting forth aims and result of commission work; how to catalog a library; propaganda against subscription books; a circular to arouse library interest in rural communities.

Of the above it should be mentioned that the New York State Department of Education is planning to issue a new edition of Miss Zaidee Brown's "Buying list for small libraries." I understand also that

"Essentials in library administration" is also being brought up to date.

Probably the most eagerly sought pamphlet for the use of the executive staff of commissions is an illustrated handbook of library buildings, showing plans and exteriors and interiors, together with a criticism of the results of the building, how it has worked out, etc. Such a publication would be expensive, for the reproductions of floor plans require special plates, and half-tones for pictures are expensive.

Another recommendation which has received a wide interest is a digest of the county library laws existing, with criticism and suggestions.

Another book which would be worth

while is one for a public library, similar to Miss Martha Wilson's "School library management," or Mr. Certain's "Standard library organization . . . for secondary schools."

For the use of the commission workers, and one which the League might legitimately undertake for its members is "An efficiency test" to be used in making surveys.

New York State cautions, "Save the funds for a year or so until a better price of printing can be obtained," and along this line I suggest that while material for a book on buildings be collected, we should not attempt to publish any of the material at present.

WHAT THE LEAGUE OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONS CAN DO FOR STATES WITHOUT ORGANIZED COMMISSIONS

By MARY ELIZABETH DOWNEY, *Library Secretary and Organizer, Department of Public Instruction, Utah*

My informal talk will consider three points: First, as to the League removing several notes from itself before it will be able to give help to states without library commissions; second, as to a survey of states already having commissions; and third, suggestions from my own experiences and those of present and ex-commission workers as to help which has been given to states without library commissions.

From my viewpoint, supported by interviews with many present and past League members, it would seem to be the consensus of opinion that the League itself will have to be resurrected, or revived, if it ever had life, before it has anything to offer to states now without commissions.

It is plain to be seen, for instance, that the League of Library Commissions has no part in shaping the policies of the A. L. A. Again, there seems to be no distinction between work of the A. L. A., and that directly of the League. Take the Library Survey Committee, which is concerned directly with the work of library commis-

sions. You have heard, in group discussions of members of the League, of the questionnaires being sent from survey committees to the individual libraries throughout a state. Should this be done with no relation to the League or at least the individual members representing such a state, who should be the persons most vitally interested in that survey?

In looking back through the years to the beginning of the League, one remembers with what awe a new commission worker approached its meetings and now wonders whether the life then manifest was real or mere camouflage. Possibly the lack of growth in members and influence comes from too many people coming into state commissions with this work not paramount but to be used merely as a stepping-stone to another position carrying with it a larger salary, on obtaining which all interest in the League is lost.

Our constitution and by-laws are at some fault in this, as there is no provision for holding or continuing the membership of individuals formerly but no longer in active commission work. The